

DDA 83-0438

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Science and Technology

FROM: Harry E. Fitzwater
Deputy Director for Administration

SUBJECT: ORD New Initiative: Language School Upgrade

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*Reviewed by DDA*

1. [redacted] has told me of the meeting he and other OTE people had with Phil Eckman and some of his staff on 8 February concerning the proposed ORD New Initiative for the FY 1985 Program relating to the development of an integrated computer-based training system for the Language School. As I understand the nature of this New Initiative, it involves a mixture of research and development projects to systematically approach the application of existing and emerging technologies to language training. If approved, the New Initiative would build on the work to be done on the already funded DCI Production Enhancement project on Language Training Technology. I want to record with you my strong support for this latest ORD New Initiative and to urge that you give it favorable consideration at your upcoming DDS&T Program Review scheduled for 1 March.

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2. As you are well aware, the Agency shortage of adequate foreign language skills remains a matter of urgent concern. Even though this year's Language Development Committee Report indicates that we are making some progress in arresting the decline of language capability, there remains a great deal to be done in this area in the coming years. Unfortunately, we will be able to match only very limited increases in personnel resources against this ongoing priority requirement. We have to find ways to substantially increase our training capacity with at best only a slightly augmented teaching staff. I am convinced that computer-based training systems, if geared to our specific and unique needs, would provide this additional capacity. In addition to capacity, Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) offers exciting potential for flexible training approaches permitting language study at home, in employees' immediate offices, and even at overseas locations. I believe that it would be possible for us to develop CAI systems which would not only meet immediate and future language training requirements, but it would also have transferability to other OTE training activities.

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3. If we are to get up to speed on CAI, we must make a systematic and substantial commitment such as proposed by ORD. Their proposed Initiative represents a sound start which warrants the support of us all.

Harry E. Fitzwater

cc: D/ORD

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